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Pennsylvania War History Commission

APPOINTED BY

PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF NATIONAL DEFENSE

AND

COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC SAFETY

HEADQUARTERS
1300 LOCUST STREET
PHILADELPHIA

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OUTLINE OF PURPOSE AND SCOPE

GENERAL PURPOSE. The War History Commission is the official body appointed to make a permanent record of the military, economic, and civic participation of Pennsylvania in the Great War. Its archives are filed in the fire-proof building of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The records are being arranged under subjects and subdivided into counties, so that they may be available in the future for local historians.

PERMANENT MEMORIAL. The collection of the records of the war will include personal military records, the records of military and naval units in which Pennsylvania was represented, and the many-fold activities within the State during war-times. This collection will be of immense value as a picture of the exertions put forth by the State of Pennsylvania to help win the war. In many respects it is the most fitting and most permanent memorial which can be erected to the three hundred and fifty thousand Pennsylvanians who entered the National Service, and to the millions of others at home who aided with personal service, with money, food, munitions, ships and manufactured goods to defeat the common enemy.

PENNSYLVANIA'S RECORD IN THE WAR. The record of Pennsylvania and Pennsylvanians in the Great War continues the great patriotic services performed by the State in the Revolution and the Civil War. The Twenty-eighth Division of the American Expeditionary Force, made up of the National Guard of Pennsylvania, suffered greater casualties than any other division in France with the exception of three divisions of regulars. At home, Pennsylvania produced probably more than one-half of the munition supplies for the American Army; its mines furnished all the anthracite and a large portion of the bituminous coal of the country; the Pennsylvania shores of the Delaware played a larger part in ship-building than any other district. In national finance, transportation, agriculture and in war-welfare work Pennsylvania took an honorable part. The duty of the Pennsylvania War History Commission is to record these varied activities. Every significant story of patriotic exertion and sacrifice, no matter how small or how great, deserves a place in the Commission's records.

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I. MILITARY AND NAVAL RECORDS

The War History Commission includes within its archives the service records of individual Pennsylvanians, and of those units in which Pennsylvanians predominated.

1. INDIVIDUAL SERVICE RECORDS. The Commission has prepared a "service record blank" upon which may be reported the facts concerning the military or naval record of each person who has entered the national service, or the service of any of the Allies. These blanks can be used also for Red Cross, Y. M. C. A., K. of C., Y. M. H. A., and other workers who have undertaken service in camps or the field.

The blanks have been circulated in every county of the State, and have been reprinted in many newspapers. Already many thousands have been returned to the headquarters of the Commission. A large number of them have been accompanied with photographs, letters from camp or the front and other matter illustrating the person's war-time activities. For each name a folder is prepared, in which are deposited all records relating to the individual. These folders are filed under county headings.

The Commission feels that the Service Record Blanks should be filled out and filed at once, even if all the desired information cannot be obtained. Many families may move from the State, some men in the service may never return to their home State, and it is important that the service lists be completed at as early a date as possible. Copies of the blank will be sent to any one who can secure the records of one or more Pennsylvanians in the service.

2. RECORDS OF MILITARY AND NAVAL UNITS IN WHICH PENNSYLVANIANS ARE REPRESENTED. The official records of these units must in time be secured from the National Departments at Washington. Already, however, much information is available in the form of War and Navy Department communications, in personal diaries, in newspaper correspondence and in private letters. The War History Commission is particularly anxious to obtain personal narratives, diaries, and letters of officers and privates in both the Army and Navy. Where relatives wish to retain the originals, the Commission will gladly have copies made, and return the originals to their owners.

II. WAR-TIME ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE STATE

It is impracticable to list here all the war-time activities of which the Commission desires facts, illustrations and narratives. The following topics are only suggestive, but they will give some idea of the field to be covered.

1. AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SUPPLY. Under this topic are included the work of Granges, Farmers' Clubs, Farm Councils, the Rural Progress Association and similar bodies; the activities of county food administrators; the question of farm labor and ways of solving it; the use of farm tractors; the control of prices; educational means of promoting agriculture; methods of disseminating ideas of cooking and food conservation; statistics of agricultural production; personal narratives of farmers who met and solved new problems.

2. MANUFACTURES AND SHIP-BUILDING. In the manufacturing field Pennsylvania contributed more to win the war than any other State. Information is desired upon the war activities of individual plants and establishments as well as organizations of manufacturers. Valuable information can be obtained concerning plant extensions and adaptations for war work, the character and amount of the product and the problems faced and

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solved. The injurious effect of the War upon "non-essential" industries will also be interesting.

3. TRANSPORTATION, TELEGRAPH, AND TELEPHONE. Both before and after the taking over by the Government of these public service corporations, the transportation systems of Pennsylvania played a great part in the War. A large portion of all troops sent abroad passed through the State; thousands of motor trucks in long trains traversed the highways of the State. Facts are being gathered concerning all these mattters.

4. LABOR. Under this heading will be included the mobilization of the workers for war industries, under such topics as placements by labor bureaus, wage agreements, special training for new industrial positions, housing problems, etc.

5. FINANCE. This will include the work of banks and bankers in financing national loans, in financing war industries and similar activities; the co-operative committees on W. S. S. and Liberty Loans, and the work of individuals and special corporations; the share of Pennsylvania in national taxation, and the effect of taxation upon the State's industries; the work of the Capital Issues Committee in the State.

6. COMMERCE AND COMMERCIAL ORGANIZATIONS. This topic covers the effect of the War upon the commerce of the State; the experiences of individual firms and corporations; the work of the War Trade Board in the State; foreign shipping as affected by the War; the manifold activities of Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade.

7. EDUCATION. How the War affected schools and colleges in attendance, character of studies, numbers of teaching force, etc.; and how the schools and colleges helped win the War by the patriotic exertions of teachers and pupils; the Student Army Training Corps.

8. WOMEN IN THE WAR. It is not the intention of the Commission to separate the work of women from that of men and children. All citizens were engaged in the undertakings listed under the headings here given. But in addition, highly important activities were carried on by many organizations composed wholly or largely of women. A record of all these activities is desired.

9. THE MEDICAL AND DENTAL PROFESSIONS. Both at home and in the service medical and dental practitioners helped greatly. They aided the draft boards and the drafted man; they organized hospitals and brought modern science into the front line trenches. Personal narratives of individuals are desired as well as statistics of the activities of groups of professional men.

10. OTHER PROFESSIONS. Each in its own way did its share. Most interesting narratives will be found among the lawyers who aided draft boards; among scientific experts and engineers who developed new products and processes; in the press, through its tremendous power over public opinion; among the artists who designed posters, donated paintings, devised camouflage schemes, and recorded in their works the happenings and spirit of war times; and among musicians and theatrical artists who donated their services without stint to entertain the men in the service.

11. CHURCHES, RELIGIOUS AND FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS AND SOCIAL CLUBS. Scarcely a religious or social organization in the State did not play its part in the War, and each should make a record of its work.

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12. WAR WELFARE ORGANIZATIONS. Many of these were formed for a special service and soon will cease their activities, if they have not already done so. The Commission desires to obtain their original records, reports of activities, photographs and other illustrations relating to their work.

13. OFFICIAL BODIES. The Commission is gathering all possible material relating to war-time activities of the State and local governments, and of the National Government within Pennsylvania.

14. PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF NATIONAL DEFENSE AND COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC SAFETY. The activities of the Council and Committee and its county branches touched almost every subject mentioned in these pages. The War History Commission is the official custodian of the records of the Council and Committee and of its county branches. The Commission also desires individual narratives from persons who co-operated with the Council and Committee in any capacity.

III. CLASSES OF MATERIALS DESIRED

The War History Commission will file, catalogue and properly arrange historical materials relating to any of the activities mentioned herein. The materials desired include (1) all kinds of printed matter relating to Pennsylvania's part in the War; (2) photographs, pictures and war-time mementoes; (3) files of newspapers and periodicals published in Pennsylvania, or articles and books about Pennsylvania; (4) personal narratives of all kinds of war activity, whether in the service, or in industrial, financial or welfare work at home; (5) manuscript minutes and reports of war organizations; (6) compilations showing the war-work of cities, boroughs and counties, of chambers of commerce, of educational institutions and of industrial establishments.

IV. COMPILATION OF WAR HISTORY

After the gathering of war records is completed, the Commission will undertake the compilation of a history of the deeds, records, and achievements of soldiers, sailors, marines, and of citizens and organizations of the Commonwealth active during the war with Germany and Austria.

The Commission trusts that persons who engaged in war work will not let any natural feeling of modesty prevent the preparation of a full and true record of Pennsylvania in war-times.

For further information address Albert E. McKinley, Secretary, Pennsylvania War History Commission, 1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia.

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